

Marking Classified Information

Declassification Exemptions

For information subject to automatic declassification, the following exemptions apply

Exempting 25 year old information

The markings 25X1-9 are reserved for information that is 25 years old and has been granted an exemption from automatic declassification (by topic or file series) not to exceed 50 years from the information's initial creation

Format of a 25X1-9 exemption on the Declassify Line:

"25X1" through "25X9" exemptions, with a date or event only when the originally classified information clearly falls under a pre-existing Interagency Security Classification Appeals Panel (ISCAP) approved exemption.

For example:

Declassify on: 25X4, 20401014 or Completion of Operations (COT)

What are the 25X1 through 25X9 exemptions?

25X1	Reveal the identity of a confidential human source, a human intelligence source, a relationship with an intelligence or security service of a foreign government or international organization, or a non-human intelligence source; or impair the effectiveness of an intelligence method currently in use, available for use, or under development.
25X2	Reveal information that would assist in the development, production, or use of weapons of mass destruction
25X3	Reveal information that would impair U.S. cryptologic systems or activities
25X4	Reveal information that would impair the application of state-of-the-art technology within a U.S. weapon system
25X5	Reveal formally named or numbered U.S. military war plans that remain in effect, or reveal operational or tactical elements of prior plans that are contained in such active plans
25X6	Reveal information, including foreign government information, that would cause serious harm to relations between the United States and a foreign government, or to ongoing diplomatic activities of the United States
25X7	Reveal information that would impair the current ability of United States Government officials to protect the President, Vice President, and other protectees for whom protection services, in the interest of the national security, are authorized
25X8	Reveal information that would seriously impair current national security emergency preparedness plans or reveal current vulnerabilities of systems, installations, or infrastructures relating to the national security
25X9	Violate a statute, treaty, or international agreement that does not permit the

	automatic or unilateral declassification of information at 25 years
--	---

Exempting 50 year old information

The markings 50X1-9 are reserved for information that is 50 years old and has been granted an exemption from automatic declassification (by topic or files series) not to exceed 75 years from the information's initial creation.

The exemption category numbers and reasons are the same as for 25 year exemptions, except the number "50" is used in place of "25."

In addition there are two more specific 50X_ declassification exemptions.

What are 50X1-HUM and 50X2-WMD?

50X1-HUM	Reveals the identity of a confidential human source or a human intelligence source
50X2-WMD	Reveals key design concepts of weapons of mass destruction

Exempting 75 year old information

The Secretary of Defense or the Secretaries of the Military Departments, or their senior agency officials, as appropriate, may propose within five years of the onset of automatic declassification to further exempt specific information from declassification at 75 years. Such proposals must be formally accepted by the ISCAP.

The exemption category numbers and reasons are the same as for 25 year exemptions, except the number "75" is used in place of "25."

d. When to Request an Exemption. Exemptions shall be requested not more than 5 years and not less than 1 year before information is subject to automatic declassification except for 75-year exemptions which shall be requested in accordance with subparagraph 13.b.(3) of this section.

e. Who Identifies and Requests an Exemption. In all cases, OCAs are responsible for identifying information that should be exempted from automatic declassification. The type of exemption requested (i.e., specific information, specific records, or file series) determines who must request the exemption.

No Longer Authorized Declassification Guidance and Exemptions

The following exemptions are no longer authorized to appear on the Declassify On line, but they may still be found on old documents:

DNI Only or DCI Only

This declassification guidance meant that only the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) or the Director of Counter Intelligence could declassify the information

Imagery subject to E.O. 12951 is marked with the declassification instruction “DCI Only” or “DNI Only,” use “25X1, E.O. 12951” as the declassification instruction, as specified by the DNI. (Contact the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, Classification Management (NGA/SISX) for assistance in determining whether specific imagery is subject to E.O. 12951.) Otherwise, for documents marked with the declassification instructions “DCI Only” or “DNI Only” which do NOT contain information subject to E.O. 12951 use a declassification date that is 25 years from the date of the source document or 25 years from the current date if the source document date is not available.

Subject to treaty or international agreement

This declassification guidance meant that the declassification date was subject to treaty or international agreement and was therefore indefinite

25X1-human

This declassification marking applied to information that would reveal the identity of confidential human sources or human intelligence sources, but not to all intelligence sources and methods. “50X1-HUM” replaces “25X1-human” which is no longer an authorized declassification instruction

Originating Agency’s Determination Required (OADR)

Not authorized for documents created after October 14, 1995

This declassification guidance meant that the agency that originally classified the material determined whether the information could be declassified

X1-X8

Not authorized for documents created after September 22, 2003

They applied to classified information that would be exempt from automatic declassification after 10 years.

In accordance with 32 CFR, Part 2001, when information is marked with previously authorized exemption categories X-1 through X-8, or with the instructions “OADR” (Originating Agency’s Determination Required) or “MR” (Manual Review), including when preceded by “Source marked,” use a declassification date of 25 years from the date of the source document or 25 years from the current date if the source document date is not available, unless exempted.